



Source: Washington Trust for Historic Preservation, 2012 Youth Summit: Connecting Cultures, at Toppenish Mural, Toppenish, Washington

## Toolkit for Strengthening Diversity in Preservation Planning: Latino Communities and Heritage

### INTRODUCTION

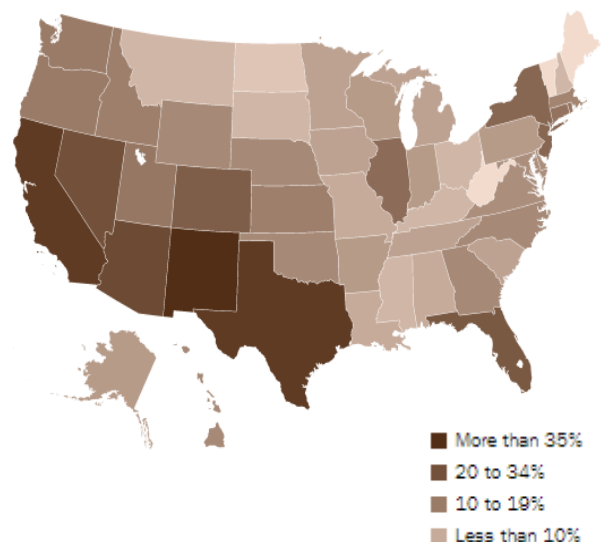
The fifty-two million Americans who identify themselves as Hispanic or Latino currently make up 15 percent of the population, and are quickly increasing the country's diversity.<sup>i</sup>

Latino Americans are far from a uniform population. Some people trace their ancestry to the Spanish colonials or the indigenous groups of Mexico who settled in land that is now the American southwest. Others identify with the generations of migrants who entered the US during the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries from Spain and from Latin American countries, including Mexico, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and Bolivia among others.

From the arrival of the Spanish in the 15th century to the 21st century, the contributions of Latino national figures and everyday people have dramatically shaped American culture, institutions, and cities and towns.

*Since, 2011, the three major nationalities comprising the US Latino population are Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Salvadorians. Latino culture has had a significant impact on American history from the 15<sup>th</sup> century.*

**Latinos as Percentage of State Populations, 2011**



## **SUPPORTING LATINO COMMUNITIES IN PRESERVATION PLANNING**

The National Park Service Historic Preservation Planning Program (HPPP) encourages state planners to identify communities that have not been engaged in previous statewide planning efforts or that have a significant stake in historic resources that have not been the focus of preservation work in the past. This guidance document will outline approaches that SHPOs may want to consider when collaborating with Latino communities about their historic resources and preservation interests.

There are many potential barriers to inclusiveness in statewide preservation planning. For example, a community may be interested in attending the state planning meetings, but residents with a lesser command of English may feel reluctant to participate in discussions predominantly spoken in English. In another community, a building valued for its political history may not be considered “old enough” by preservation standards and is therefore not locally protected from demolition by new development. Strengthening diversity in preservation planning asks us to address that every day, people deal with many types of obstacles when trying to become more involved in public affairs and have their interests known, from basic transportation access to social marginalization.

### **Why is it important to support Latino communities in planning?**

- To deepen the recognition and understanding of Latino history in the US is an essential goal.
- To remove potential obstacles to participation in the statewide planning process including language differences, geographic isolation, and alternative historic preservation values.
- To encourage participation in multiple phases of the planning process, including public input opportunities, partnership building, and goal setting.

### **Long-term Benefits**

- Inclusive interpretation of US history and culture, creating a richer American story.
- Sustained programs through new and valuable participants.
- Valuing diversity is woven into decision-making, resource allocation, and everyday interactions, producing equitable and culturally rich social environments.

## KEY TERMS

**Equity:** fairness or justice in the way people are treated.

**Formal interpretation:** creating opportunities for audiences to connect with the values of historic places, landscapes, artifacts, and other physical resources within the contexts of architecture, history, and culture.

**Historic resource inventories:** official lists of historically significant districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects. This document refers to a variety of historic resource inventories including local, State, and Tribal Registers of Historic Places, the National Register of Historic Places, and National Historic Landmarks.

**Inclusiveness:** collaborative processes where all stakeholders offer input and are addressed by the plan.

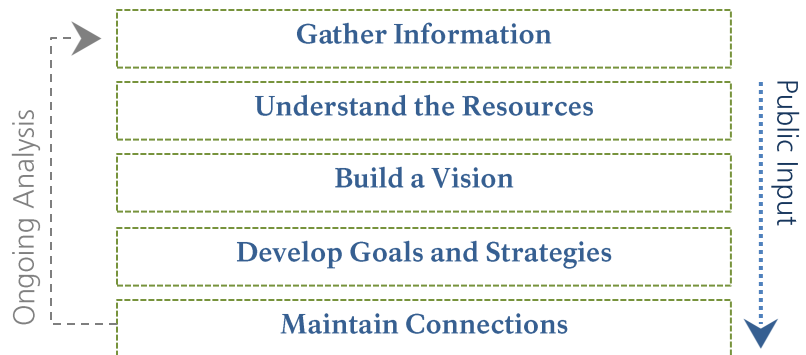
**Underrepresented community:** cultural or social populations, and related organizations, that have not been previously engaged in statewide planning efforts or been the focus of preservation work in the past.

## THE PLANNING PROCESS

This toolkit's strategies are organized as "Essential Questions" and "Recommendations" within 5 planning phases. The Essential Questions can act as springboards for ideas on how the Recommendations can be enhanced and transformed for local contexts.

### PLANNING PHASES

1. Gather Information
2. Understand the Resources
3. Build a Vision
4. Develop Goals and Strategies
5. Maintain Connections



**When representing the interests and viewpoints of more Latino communities in the statewide preservation plan, what are some potential obstacles and opportunities?**



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## Phase 1: Gather Information about Communities

It is important to consider what new information must be gathered to better understand your state's residents and their interests. Examine information about your state's population, its communities, and emerging needs.

### Which of our partner organizations or agencies have information that will help us to locate and learn more about our state's Latino residents?

Build off of existing efforts. Identify the agencies and organizations that may have resources to share. Entities to contact may include:

- ☐ City, county, or regional urban planning departments
- ☐ Community development departments and offices
- ☐ Local Latino organizations and churches

To learn more about community interests review national Latino organizations, and research centers including the National Council of La Raza, and the Pew Research Center.



### Based on this information, plan in advance to engage Latino communities.

Advice for building a community engagement strategy:

- ☐ **Begin the Conversation.** Develop relationships with representatives of Latino heritage organizations and other community organizations to identify shared interests and learn about the local preservation programs already accomplished or in progress.
- ☐ **Collaborate to Overcome Barriers.** Build support for preservation with key community organizations that can help to publicize the importance of the statewide planning project. Ask these organizations for advice about best contact methods, public meeting locations, and meeting times. Additionally, organizations may support future public meetings, particularly through trusted locations and bi-lingual facilitators.

A “Community Engagement Workbook” can be helpful, for keeping track of people contacted, important information learned, and partnership organizations. Below are example components:

Who do we want to reach within Latino communities and why?	What are potential barriers to community participation?	What partnership organizations can help outreach and build public interest?	What partnerships organizations may help to facilitate future public meetings?



## Phase 2: Understand the Resources

A fuller knowledge of Latino historic resources in your state begins with reviewing and developing historic contexts to set underlying cultural themes. Additionally, analysis of current state historic resource inventories for Latino historic and cultural resources will serve a number of key purposes. Finally, it will be important to develop an understanding the types of preservation projects already underway by local groups.

### How can we learn more from Latino communities about their history and preservation interests?

- ☐ Collaborate with heritage organizations and other relevant community organizations to build a deeper understanding of local historic preservation practice. For example, groups may be working on projects that aren't directly related to physical sites, but illuminate the political memories or spiritual practices connected to place, like oral histories or art installations.
- ☐ Collaborate to meet residents who may be interested in volunteering or offering their local expertise to state preservation projects such as updating the historic resource inventory or youth programs.

### How can inventory analyses help to prioritize identification, interpretation, and stewardship efforts?

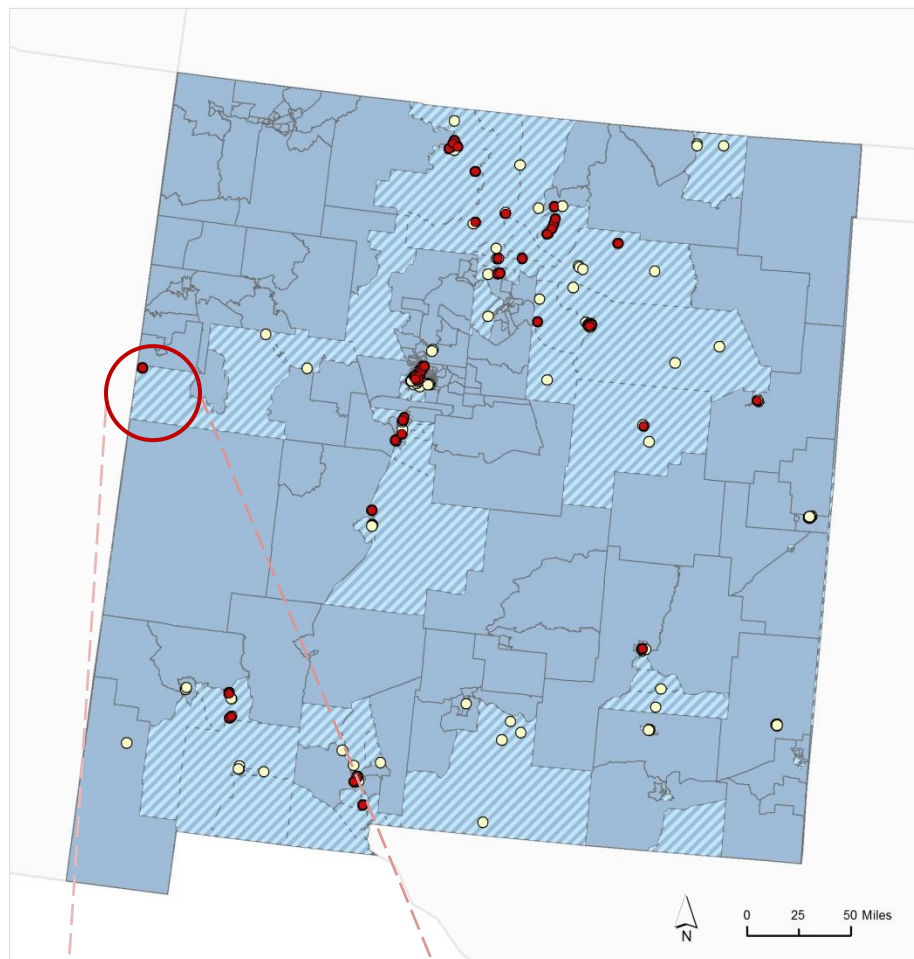
Advice for analyzing and mapping resources:

- ☐ Review existing historic context statements for information about Latino history and historic resources. Identify geographic areas and time periods that have not been covered by those context statements.
- ☐ Map inventoried historic resources and predominantly Latino census tracts together to interpret the resources' relationships to Latino communities, using your available GIS resources.
- ☐ Mapping historic resources in relation to Latino communities can help to identify the resources that may be valued by local residents, and help to further determine the nearby organizations and communities that you intend to engage for future preservation projects.
- ☐ Review recent National Register of Historic Places nominations, historic tax credit projects, and preservation grant projects, to build a better idea of the communities that may have been recently engaged in preservation and could be leaders among Latino groups statewide.

GIS software and the online software Policy Map are useful tools for mapping historic resources and predominantly Latino communities with census data. [www.policymap.com](http://www.policymap.com)



## Mapping National Register of Historic Places Resources in New Mexico's Latino Communities



- ✓ Using ESRI ArcGIS software, map predominantly Latino census tracts and National Register of Historic Places resources.
- ✓ Identify NRHP Latino historic resources on map.
- ✓ Begin to evaluate the significance of inventoried resources to surrounding communities, and if there may be other areas of under-documented resources nearby.

- NRHP Latino historic resources
- NRHP resources in Latino communities
- ▨ Predominantly Latino census tracts



### The Hawikuh Ruins

The ruins were once the largest of the Zuni cities of Cibola, and the first pueblo to be encountered by the Spanish Coronado expedition.

### Questions considered:

Is the history of Spanish exploration important to the nearby community?

Are there nearby organizations that can help us to build a deeper knowledge of local preservation interests and practice?

How can we begin to engage nearby local residents who may be interested in future state preservation projects?

Download the National Register of Historic Places spatial data sets from the NPS National Register webpage.

[http://www.nps.gov/nr/research/data\\_downloads.htm](http://www.nps.gov/nr/research/data_downloads.htm)



## Phase 3: Build a Vision

The vision for preservation in the state should be developed and evaluated collaboratively. A combination of professional and public input is essential, to ensure that the broadest spectrum of viewpoints is heard. It's important to implement strategies that make the state plan's planning committees and public input process culturally and socially inclusive. There are many factors that may limit Latino communities' participation in public input opportunities.

### **New partnerships help to expand and enhance the statewide vision:**

- ☐ Invite leaders of Latino heritage organizations and community organizations to be members of planning committees and work groups, so they can directly influence the direction and outcome of the plan.
- ☐ Empower leaders to define their interests and visions for the future.

### **Hold inclusive public input meetings to ensure that Latino communities' viewpoints and preservation interests are represented in the plan:**

Building off of the partnerships formed early on in community engagement planning, use strategies for inclusiveness in every meeting and enhance these strategies to meet local needs.

- ☐ Clarify the benefits of partnering with your state office and the benefits of attending public input meetings. What are the available preservation tools and what will be gained by an investment in preservation?
- ☐ Learn from partner organizations best methods to publicize meetings, based on community and generational preferences, and access to technology. Consider the value of phone calls from trusted organizations, word-of-mouth information sharing, and Latino media.
- ☐ Bring regional meeting to the communities, perhaps by collaborating with the organizers of established community events and meetings.
- ☐ Hire bi-lingual facilitators from partner organizations or a consulting firm to serve as the lead or "face person" for public events sponsored by the state office.
- ☐ Utilize public participation strategies including small discussion groups, and time for socializing before starting meeting tasks with provided food and beverages.





## Phase 3: Build a Vision (continued)

### Creating Inclusive Public Meetings

Gathering public opinions for the statewide preservation plan can be the most challenging step of the planning process. All residents face certain obstacles when it comes to offering their time and viewpoints at public input opportunities. Getting people to attend meetings can be difficult, and once in the room, creating productive group communication takes consideration and sensitivity.

For example, it may be difficult for some to take time from their evening jobs or responsibilities at home to attend meetings. Generally, people may be more inclined to discuss community issues that directly affect their everyday lives, rather than to build visions and goals for a statewide plan. Residents may also wish to voice their opinions on preservation issues in primarily English language meetings, but feel inhibited because of their command of the language. The challenges experienced in preservation planning are similar to those in public affairs at large.

When it comes to public participation in meetings for the state plan, it's important to understand the particular obstacles that may be experienced by Latino communities (and the differences within those communities) and to implement strategies that can make meetings more culturally and socially inclusive.

OBSTACLES		OPPORTUNITIES
<b>Familiarity:</b> Communities may be generally unfamiliar with opportunities for direct input in public affairs, and will have varying levels of knowledge about historic preservation.	➡	Partner with organizations trusted by communities to spread the word about the state plan and why preservation can be important in residents' everyday lives. Create culturally friendly meetings by demonstrating consideration and sensitivity, particularly in regard to the differences across Latino cultural groups and generations.
<b>Availability:</b> It may be difficult for some residents to find the time to participate and/or the money to spend on transportation costs to meetings.	➡	Bring the meetings to particularly isolated neighborhoods, and hold them in meeting places that are already well-utilized by communities such as churches or community centers.
<b>Language:</b> Residents with Spanish language preferences or a lesser command of English may be reluctant to participate in predominantly English discussions.	➡	Integrate simultaneous translation and Spanish language small discussion groups into meetings.

## Phase 4: Develop Goals and Strategies

Specific goals for Latino communities and historic resources will outline a statewide course of action that leverages existing efforts and empowers communities to become directly involved in preservation. Goals should be developed from the community and stakeholder values gathered from previous public input opportunities, creating real-world objectives for people to act upon.

### **How can we empower Latino communities to be stewards and interpreters of historic places?**

- ☐ Commit to achieving Latino communities' interests through goals, actions, and responsibilities in the plan.
- ☐ Support public symposiums on preservation fundamentals and tools, particularly as relevant to everyday concerns such as neighborhood development and economic vitality.
- ☐ Identify and apply in partnership for grants that help community leaders to develop a variety of projects such as local heritage trails, oral histories, and experiential learning programs for high school students.

### **How can we support collaboration and skill building?**

- ☐ Expand community-based training programs for preservation skills, including national and state register of historic places nominations.
- ☐ Assist in the coordination of partnerships between established Latino heritage organizations, and service, religious, or advocacy groups that may have related preservation interests.

### **Do our cultural resource inventories and formal interpretation practices value diverse resource types equally? Are there biases in our current inventory practices?**

- ☐ Based on resource analysis, identify statewide goals for Latino heritage recognition and interpretation, considering factors such as diversity of resource types, geographic locations, and periods of significance.
- ☐ Hire professionals with demonstrated expertise in Latino culture and public history, who can work closely with community members.
- ☐ Support programs that will help to identify and interpret historic places that Latino communities value, but may not currently meet the National Register's criteria for evaluating significance and integrity.

## Phase 5: Maintain Connections

Since goals for diversity in planning are broad beyond the state office's role, establishing partnerships to implement and monitor progress will strengthen the plan's long-term effectiveness and value.

**We've integrated new goals for Latino heritage in the plan. How can we make sure that they're effective?**

- ☐ Share responsibilities in the plan with newly invested partnership organizations.
- ☐ Include monitoring language in the plan, with room to make adjustments based on feedback from partnership organizations and the public.

**How can we make sure that our new partnerships are durable?**

- ☐ Follow up on partners' progress through regular meetings and other forms of communication.
- ☐ Survey partner organizations for ways that your office can improve its work with them; survey may include questions about dependability, attentiveness, commitment, and information sharing.

**Partnership organizations may be relatively easy to reach and follow up with. How do we stay connected with community members?**

- ☐ Follow up calls with people who have agreed to attend a public input event can give them an opportunity to provide feedback about the previous meeting and offer additional recommendations. The personal touch and time helps to keep relationships going and let people know how their voice mattered in the process.
- ☐ Create bi-lingual online public forums or other online social spaces to foster dialogue and on-going investment from community members.
- ☐ Create brief bi-lingual summaries of the plan for purposes of public discussion.



## CONCLUSION

The *Toolkit for Strengthening Diversity in Preservation Planning: Latino Communities and Heritage* was developed through a mix of research methods including a review of historic preservation planning and urban planning literature; analysis of the 20 state preservation plans most recently approved by the NPS HPPP; NPS Staff online survey; interviews with SHPO professionals; and an interview with the author of a NPS American Latino Theme Study essay. The toolkit is intended as a springboard for strategies that can help to better incorporate the experiences and viewpoints of diverse communities into multiple stages of the preservation planning process. It is a challenging, but important task. This toolkit could not have been made without the innovative ideas already in action across the US by state historic preservation offices, local organizations, and communities.

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<sup>i</sup> As discussed in the National Park Service American Latino Theme Study, this guidance document uses the identification Latino and includes the Spanish settlement and colonization of the Americas as an important part of Latino history. The term also emphasizes the experiences of people who migrated to the US from the Americas.